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RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1957

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1957

To the Chairman and Members of the Rothbury Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting to you my third Annual Report which is for the year 1957.

The estimated mid-year population has dropped by 40 and the births have dropped by 8, although there was a natural increase as births outnumbered deaths by 25. The post-war population does not appear to have altered very much and has fluctuated between 5,500 and 5,700.

The live births produced a rate slightly under the National Rate of 16.1 per 1,000 of the population. The stillbirth and infant mortality rates were satisfactory, although there was one stillbirth compared with none in the previous year. The crude death rate of 9.96 was also below the National Rate of 11.7.

I am pleased to report that no death resulted from respiratory tuberculosis, but cancer deaths increased from 5 in 1956, to 8 in 1957, and one male death was due to lung cancer. Cancer deaths represented 14% of all deaths compared with 7% in 1956, while diseases of the heart and circulatory system fell from a total of 41 to 29, which is 52% of all deaths, a decrease of 5% from the preceding year. Coronary heart disease accounted for 14.5% of all deaths and this compares with the National Rate of about 16%.

Measles occurred, as expected, in epidemic form and 177 cases were notified compared with 17 in 1956. Dysentery was also active accounting for 17 notifications. Three cases of respiratory tuberculosis were notified and a graph on page 5 shows the incidence of respiratory and other forms of tuberculosis from 1919 to 1938 and during the post-war years. There are two noteworthy features of this graph, one is the increased amplitude in the post-war years and secondly, the parallelism of the notifications of other forms of tuberculosis with respiratory tuberculosis notifications.

While studying previous Annual Reports I was interested and amused by the comments of Dr. A.S. Hedley in his report for 1951. He complained of an alarming increase in notifications of infectious diseases - a total of 292 - principally due to epidemics of dysentery, whooping cough, measles and pneumonia. Reference was made to the change in child-life -"children spent their time sitting in picture houses for two hours in a stuffy, smoky atmosphere, and a atmosphere that is often filthy in more senses than one". Perhaps therefore, television could be regarded as an improvement, at least, in reducing the dissemination of infection: but sitting for long hours in front of a television set does not improve the resistance to infection and in many cases produces fatigue with its concomitant evils.

The demand for poliomyelitis vaccinations increased during 1957, and I was able to give two inoculations of the vaccine to 266 children from the rural district. The clinics had to be held in the Jubilee Hall, Rothbury, and again transport was provided, where considered necessary.

Fortunately, the immunity index for inoculation against whooping cough and diphtheria has remained high at 83.3% which I consider very satisfactory.

Progress in slum clearance was slow, although the problem in the rural district is not acute. We were all very sorry at Mr. Oliver's period of illness, and I must express my gratitude to the Alnwick Rural District Council, and to the Surveyor and Public Health Inspector of that authority, for their kindness and help with the work of the department during Mr. Oliver's absence.

I should like, once again, to say thank you to the Chairman and Members of the Housing and Sanitation Committee for their continued interest and to the Clerk, and Mr. J.M. Oliver, Surveyor/Public Health Inspector, for their co-operation and help during the year.

I am,
Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

Richard Short

Medical Officer of Health

GENERAL STATISTICS

The area of the district is 167,186 acres.

The number of inhabited houses is 1964.

The rateable value is £61,755 and the sum represented by a penny rate is £239.

The estimated mid-year population is 5520 and this figure is taken when calculating the Birth and Death rate.

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	42	33	75
Illegitimate	2	3	5
Totals	44	36	80
Birth rate per 1,000 of the population	..	..	14.49

Still Births			
Legitimate	1	-	1
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Totals	1	-	1

Stillbirth rate per 1,000 of total live and stillbirths 12.34

Death Rate of Infants Under One Year

All infants (per 1,000 live births)	12.50
Legitimate infants (per 1,000 leg. live births)	NIL
Illegitimate infants	200

Deaths from Measles	NIL
Deaths from Whooping Cough	NIL
Deaths from Diarrhoea	NIL

Deaths	Male	Female	Total
	27	28	55

Death rate per 1,000 of the population	9.96
Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis	NIL
Deaths from Other Puerperal Causes	NIL
Deaths from Cancer	8

CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH

	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	-	-	-
Tuberculosis (Other)	-	-	-
Syphilitic Disease	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infections	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Measles	-	-	-
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	-	-	-
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	1	-	1
" " Lung, Bronchus	1	-	1
" " Breast	-	1	1
" " Uterus	-	-	-
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	2	3	5
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	-	-	-
Diabetes	-	2	2
Vascular Lesions of the Nervous System	5	11	16
Coronary Disease, Angina	5	3	8
Hypertension with Heart Disease	-	-	-
Other Heart Disease	2	1	3
Other Circulatory Disease	1	1	2
Influenza	1	-	1
Pneumonia	1	1	2
Bronchitis	1	-	1
Other Disease of Respiratory System	1	-	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	-	-	-
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	-	-	-
Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	-	1
Hyperplasia of Prostate	-	-	-
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	-	-	-
Congenital Malformations	-	-	-
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	2	2	4
Motor Vehicle Accidents	1	-	1
All Other Accidents	2	3	5
Suicide	-	-	-
Homicide and Operations of War	-	-	-
Totals	27	28	55

INFANT MORTALITY

During the year ended 31st December, 1957

Cause of Death	Age	Place of Death
Convulsions	1 week	Fleming Memorial Hospital, Jesmond.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

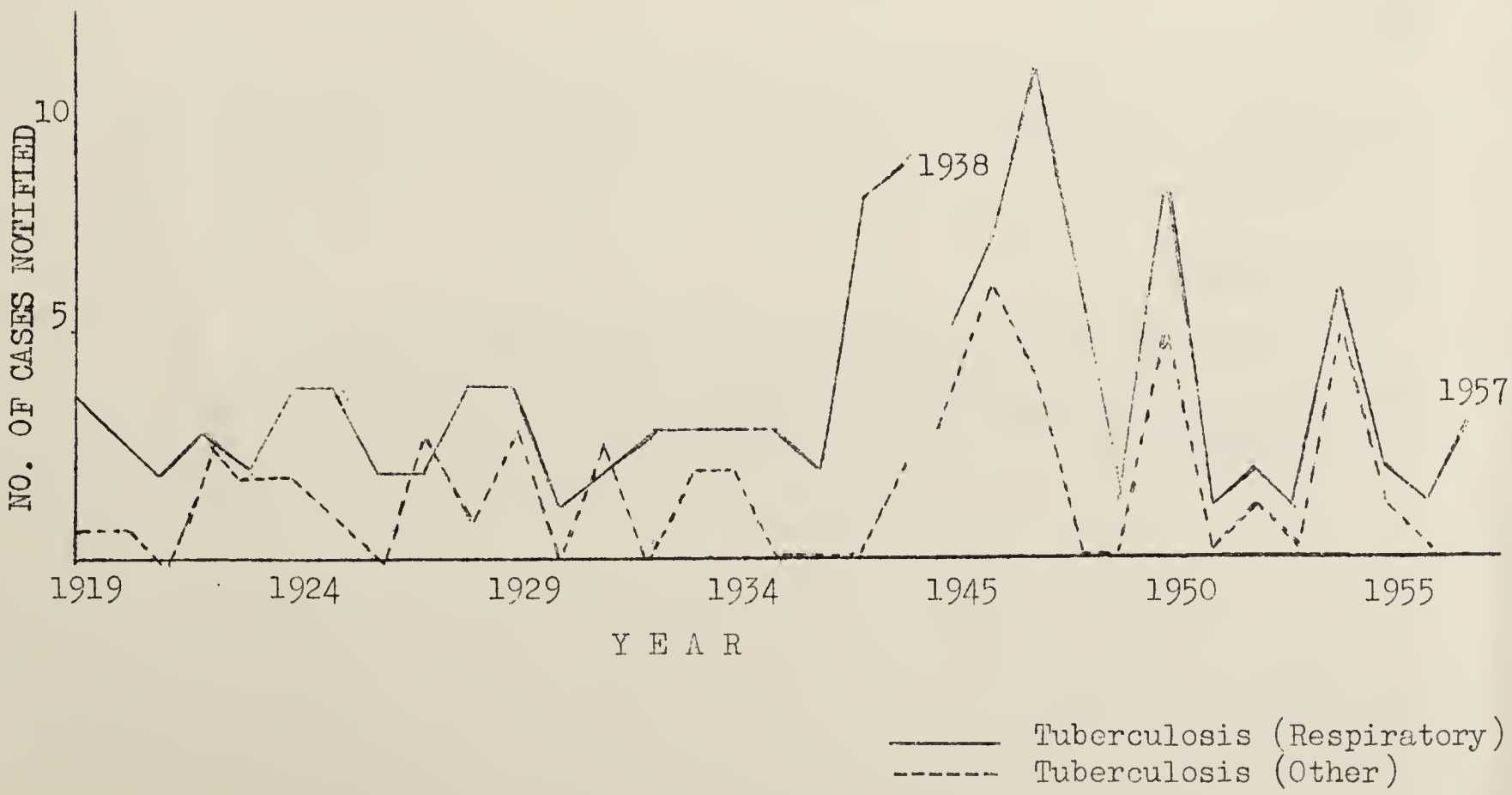
Scarlet Fever	4
Whooping Cough	9
Measles	177
Pneumonia	7
Diphtheria	-
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	-
Dysentery	17
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-
Smallpox	-
Paratyphoid Fever	-
Enteric Fever	-
Erysipelas	1
Food Poisoning	4

TUBERCULOSIS

Respiratory

	24 yrs	52 yrs	60 yrs	TOTAL
Male	1		1	2
Female		1		1

TUBERCULOSIS NOTIFICATIONS. 1919 - 1938 & 1945 - 1957



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

1957

The work in this department was of necessity reduced during the year owing to my absence from the office through illness of almost six months. I would like to thank the Council and the public for their great tolerance and patience during this period. I am indebted to Mr. O.M. Farrell, Surveyor, and Mr. J. Staig, Public Health Inspector, of the Alnwick Rural District Council, who so ably kept the wheels turning.

WATER SUPPLIES

The Council's supplies were well maintained during the year. The main at Longframlington was extended to serve the twelve houses at West Lane, thus getting rid of the insanitary storage tank. During the year the Council took over the responsibility for maintaining the Holystone supply.

SEWERAGE DISPOSAL

At long last ministerial approval was received for the Longframlington works. Work will commence late in the year and completed in 1959.

There is no change at Whittingham.

HOUSING

Council houses total 242 and twelve more are under construction at Longframlington.

Five private houses were erected during the year and in addition the Northumberland and Tyneside River Board commenced building a pair of cottages at Rothbury.

No houses were included in Clearance Areas. 40 unfit houses were made fit as a result of informal action.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

During the year 24 applications were received and approved, making the total to 31st December, 1957, 202.

FOOD

It was not found possible to do much work for the reasons already indicated. Some progress is however being made at food premises in the standard of hygiene. There is no change in the list of food premises except that one fish and chip shop has closed down.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

No extension of the service has been made during the year. We were fortunate in renting the large depression at Whitton Burn. This has saved the long haul to Lorbottle. The burn will be piped in as required.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949					
	Type of Property Non-Agricultural				
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	All other (including Business Premises)	Total of Cols. 1, 2 & 3.	Agricultural
1 Number of properties in district	9	1791	118	1918	241
11 Number of properties as a result of:-					
(a) Notifications	-	12	2	14	-
(b) Survey under the Act.	9	16	-	25	-
(c) Otherwise (e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose.)	-	4	11	15	-
111 Total inspections carried out including re-inspections.	21	37	-	58	-
1V Number of properties inspected (in Sec.2) which were found to be infested by:-					
(a) Rats	5	13	2	20	-
(b) Mice	-	-	-	-	-
V Number of infested properties (in Sec. 1V) treated by L.A.	5	13	2	20	-
V1 Total treatments carried out including re-treatments.	10	17	3	30	-

The "twice yearly" treatment of sewers was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. No new areas of infestation were found.

FACTORIES ACT 1937 & 1948

Part 1 of the Act

1. INSPECTIONS for purpose of provisions as to health.

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Secs. 1,2,3,4 & 6, are to be enforced by the Local Authority	1	-	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	18	3	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	3	-	-	-
T O T A L	22	3	-	-

2. CASES in which defects were found - None.